

Wyoming Ag in the Classroom to recognize Exemplary Teachers of the year!

Three Wyoming teachers have been chosen as the recipients of Wyoming Ag in the Classroom's (WAIC) 2007 awards.

Laurie Wasserburger and Sandra Johnson of Lusk, Wyoming have been named as the WAIC 2007 Exemplary Teachers of the Year, and Nick Siddle of Sheridan was named the 2007 FFA Ag Advocate award winner.

Laurie Wasserburger and Sandra Johnson were nominated for their work with students in offering a wide variety of outdoor learning experiences and the use of local experts and outside agencies to enhance the learning experience.

Both teachers teach fifth grade at Lusk elementary. Wasserburger has taught in Niobrara County Schools for over 15 years and Johnson has taught for seven. Both teachers team teach in certain areas and collaborate on agriculture and natural resource education opportunities for the students in Lusk.

This team of teachers starts the year off with the World Water Monitoring day. Students go to the Nelson ranch and perform many tests on water quality and then take part in many activities to process the results back in the classroom. The results are then logged on the Water monitoring website for the world to see the water quality in Lusk, Wyoming. Other activities during the year include taking students to the Dainton Ranch for a field study, an intensive study of trees and insects, and caring for the land during Stewardship week. These teachers incorporate agriculture and natural resource concepts into everyday teaching and provide opportunities for students to learn about agriculture and natural resource careers. To round out the year, the teachers present and engage students in geology unit that investigates the layers of the earth mineral ID. And then go to the Stroh Ranch for a hands-on study session.

Nick Siddle was nominated for the 2007 FFA Ag Advocate for his work with the students at Sheridan High School. Siddle has taught for 23 years and in the time, has developed an outstanding curriculum and program for the students in Sheridan.

He has provided focus and direction in retaining non-traditional agriculture students. Siddle is forward thinking and works closely with the college to provide students with every opportunity to go on to further their education in agriculture and natural resource fields. He has developed his program so it is very active in the community and provides for many chances to gain exposure for his students. His programs have given a strong curriculum that has enabled the Sheridan students to be highly competitive and give them the tools to be successful in the future. His hands-on approach to education has driven enrollment in his classes to a new level.

His program has a four prong approach to meet student's needs. Animal science, Ag mechanics, Outdoor Science, Agriculture business is the areas where students can find many classes to stretch their mind and refine their skills. Other areas that are represented in the Ag curriculum include: FFA, Supervised experience programs, and many career development events.

All three teachers will be honored during this year's Wyoming State Fair on August 15, 2007 at a special BBQ. Each recipient will receive a cash award, personalized award, plaque, and nomination for the national Ag in the Classroom Teaching Excellence Award.

Wyoming Agriculture In The Classroom (WAIC) is a nonprofit organization incorporated in 1987 for the purpose of developing an understanding about the importance and the values of agriculture and its role in maintaining and improving the environment, economy, and quality of life. The Annual excellence in teaching award is just one of the many programs that WAIC has developed to promote agriculture awareness for Wyoming students.